



# Transitioning



# Youth

## Transitioning Youth Newsletter

May/June 2014

*Resources for Students with Disabilities and their Families  
Preparing for Life After High School*

### In This Issue

[Farewell to Secretary Raggio](#)

[Resource Spotlight: The  
Assistive Technology Lending  
Library](#)

[Transition News & Notices](#)

### Quick Links

[About Us](#)

[Events & Announcements](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

[Join the Governor's  
Mailing List](#)

## IATC Says Farewell to Secretary Raggio

*May and June are big months for transitioning youth as their final school year draws to an end. We hope the resources shared throughout the past year have been helpful for those students getting ready to leave high school.*

*This year, May and June also mark a time for transition for the Interagency Transition Council (IATC), which said goodbye to its co-chair, Secretary Catherine A. Raggio of the Maryland Department of Disabilities, who retired in April. Secretary Raggio writes:*



Dear Reader,

I have had the honor of serving as Governor O'Malley's Secretary of Disabilities for over seven years. We have made positive strides in creating better transitioning practices for our youth with disabilities through our work on the Governor's Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities.

First, we redesigned [our website](#) and packed it with valuable information needed by parents and youth themselves. We produce timely newsletters and hold an annual conference for parents and youth. The conferences have been well attended and began targeting families two years ago by holding them on Saturdays.

In partnership with MSDE, the IATC made sure that the important [Exit Document](#) gets into the hands of each youth when they are leaving school so that they understand learning styles, supports needed and accommodations that have been provided effectively in the school setting.

The IATC has been the advisory committee for the [Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative \(MSTC\)](#). Through MSTC, TransCen, a nonprofit organization based in Rockville, has provided technical assistance to 11 local school systems on best practices for transition. These school systems will continue expanding these best practices going forward.

Through this work and more, we know that paid employment prior to leaving high school is the key to future success in the world of work. We know that knowledgeable and supportive families are critically important. I urge you to stay connected to the work of the IATC through our website.

I am retiring from State service effective April 30th, but leave the IATC in the capable hands of the new Acting Secretary of the Department of Disabilities, George Failla and Sue Page, Assistant Superintendent for DORS. Both will lead the work of the IATC and will be joined by the other State agency and advocate members.

Sincerely,

Catherine A. Raggio

## Resource Spotlight: The Assistive Technology Lending Library

Assistive technology (AT) is any device that helps a person with a disability learn, work, play, and live more independently.

For some students with disabilities, AT may be a big part of their education in high school. However, the AT students use in high school is often owned by the school; when they graduate, the AT stays with the school. This means transitioning students are responsible for getting the AT they will need for college, work, and independent living.

The Maryland Department of Disabilities' Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) can help. MDTAP has an AT lending library that is free and open to any Marylander with a disability, as well as to their families, teachers, and service providers. MDTAP has a lending library in Baltimore, and has several satellite sites around the state.



**Seven Reasons Transitioning**



## Students Should Visit MDTAP's AT Lending Library:

1. **MDTAP's services are free.** MDTAP's services are available for free to Maryland residents with disabilities of all ages. Parents and teachers can also use MDTAP's library and other services.
2. **MDTAP's services are always available.** You don't have to be a DORS or DDA client to use MDTAP's lending library or other services. There is a short waiting list to borrow some popular devices, but there is no waiting list for MDTAP's services.
3. **MDTAP provides free one-on-one AT consultation.** Not sure what AT could help you? MDTAP has AT specialists on staff who can help you learn more about what works!
4. **MDTAP gives you time to learn what AT works best for you.** You can try out new devices that may help with college, work, or independent living. AT is always changing, and you might find something you like better than what you had in high school! You can try out many of these devices where you really need them -- at home, at work, at school, or in your community -- for up to four weeks.
5. **MDTAP can save you or your service provider money.** You can find what works for you before you buy devices. When you're ready to buy a device, MDTAP can help you find where to get it (and sometimes help you get a better price!)
6. **MDTAP can help you even if you already have the AT you need.** If you've already purchased a device, but you're waiting for it to ship (or it's in the shop getting repaired) you can borrow substitute devices from the lending library.
7. **MDTAP offers services in addition to the lending library.** Additional MDTAP services included AT trainings and presentations; AT and medical equipment recycling; and a low-interest financial loan program for people purchasing AT, home modifications, and vehicle modifications.

For more information, visit [MDTAP online](#) or call 1-800-832-4827.

## Transition News & Notices

**Save the Date -- 2014 Transition Conference**

Saturday, November 15  
BWI Marriott

Plans for the 2014 Transition Conference are underway!  
Mark November 15 on your calendar; more information  
to come in the next newsletter.

**Next Interagency Transition Council Meeting**

Monday, June 2, 1:00pm-3:00pm  
2301 Argonne Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218

These meetings are open to the public; IATC members  
are required to attend. For more information, please  
contact Anne Blackfield at 410-767-3652 or  
[ablackfield@mdod.state.md.us](mailto:ablackfield@mdod.state.md.us).

**Maryland Youth Advisory Council - Apply by July 1**

The Maryland Youth Advisory Council ensures that  
Maryland youth are given the opportunity to provide  
feedback and recommendations regarding public  
policies and programs that affect their future and to  
take a leadership role in creating meaningful change.  
The council is accepting applications for new  
members. Members are ages 14-22 and serve one or  
two years. (You must turn 14 by September 1 to  
apply.) **Applications are due July 1. [Click here  
for more information.](#)**

For all other announcements, visit us on [Facebook](#).

The Maryland Transitioning Youth Website is sponsored by the Governor's Interagency  
Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities and is designed to provide information and  
resources to youth and young adults with disabilities and their families.

For more information visit at [www.mdtransition.org](http://www.mdtransition.org)  
or email [mdod@mdod.state.md.us](mailto:mdod@mdod.state.md.us)

